

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Alaska Commission on Aging

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February 21, 2009

The Honorable Joe Paskvan, Chair
Senate Labor and Commerce
Alaska State Capitol, Room 7
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Subject: Support for SB 10

Dear Chair Paskvan:

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) encourages support for SB 10 sponsored by you to require insurance programs, including Medicaid, to provide coverage for persons with cancer undergoing approved clinical trials related to cancer just as they would if an individual was receiving conventional cancer treatment.

Demonstrating the effectiveness of new cancer treatments is dependent upon clinical trials, which allow for advancement of such procedures. Many of the significant advances made in cancer treatment that are now standard procedure were made possible by clinical trials. For many people with cancer, participation in a clinical trial is often their best treatment option. This coverage is particularly important for older Alaskans because of the increased incidence of cancer among the elderly.

ACoA supports SB 10 and believes that cancer patients should have the treatment option to participate in clinical trials, if they so choose, and to have those procedures covered under insurance and Medicaid. Furthermore, coverage for clinical trials supports medical progress in the fight against this most serious and life-threatening disease. Please feel free to contact Denise Daniello, ACoA's executive director (465-4879), should you have any questions regarding our position. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Sharon Howerton-Clark
Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging

Sincerely,



Denise Daniello,
ACoA Executive Director

Cc: Senator Joe Thomas, Vice Chair
Senator Bettye Davis
Senator Kevin Meyer
Senator Con Bunde